

55-244/03

Motion for a resolution

pursuant to Rule 50

tabled by Hartmut Nassauer, Hanja Maij-Weggen, Bernd Posselt and Th. Mann

in the name of the EPP-ED Group

**on freedom of expression and religion in Vietnam**

The European Parliament

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Vietnam, especially those of 16 November 2000 on human rights and 5 July 2001 on religious freedom,
- having regard to the EC-Vietnam Framework Cooperation Agreement of July 1995,
- having regard to the EC-Vietnam Strategy Paper 2002-2006,
- having regard to the observations made by the delegation of Members of the European Parliament after visiting Vietnam from 7-11 September 2002,
- having regard to the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966,

A. whereas Vietnam as party to the ICCPR is obliged to uphold the freedoms of speech, association, religious belief and worship,

B. concerned about the legal and policy restrictions on religious freedom and the withholding of official recognition of certain religious bodies like the UBCV, the Protestant house churches and dissenting Hoa Hoa and Cao Dai groups,

C. concerned about the isolation and restriction of the movements of the Patriarch of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV), Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, who is living under conditions resembling house arrest since 1982, and of Venerable Thich Quang Do, the UBCV's second-ranking leader, who has been confined to his living quarters under guard since June 2001,

D. concerned about the continuing arrests, harassment and detentions of indigenous Montagnard Christians by the Government of Vietnam,

E. concerned about the imprisonment of Father Nguyen Van Ly since May 2001 and other religious prisoners and detainees for having expressed their religious faith peacefully,

F. concerned about Decree 31/CP, which imposes administrative probation without trial on persons who commit offences against the national security,

331. 474

G. concerned about the continuing arrests, harassment and imprisonment of peaceful dissidents and journalists by the Government of Vietnam,

H. concerned about the Government's Decree of 18 June 2002 banning Vietnamese citizens watching foreign TV programmes beamed in by satellite,

I. concerned about the call of the Vietnamese Ministry of Culture and Information in 2002 on owners of Internet cafés to monitor their customers' online activities,

1. Calls on the Vietnamese authorities to respect the religious freedom of all religious groups and to re-establish the legitimate status of the UBCV and all other non-recognised churches;

2. Calls on the Vietnamese government to release all prisoners of conscience, especially the Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, the Venerable Thich Quang Do and Father Nguyen Van Ly, and for them to be granted freedom of movement;

3. Calls on the Vietnamese government to stop the continuing arrests, harassment and detentions of indigenous Montagnard Christians;

4. Calls on the Vietnamese government to abolish Decree 31/CP and all other laws suppressing peaceful activities that are considered to be a threat to the national security;

5. Calls on the Vietnamese government to stop the continuing arrests, harassment and imprisonment of peaceful dissidents and journalists;

6. Calls on the Vietnamese government to lift all the restrictions on the free flow of information;

7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the representatives of the UBVC, the Cao Dai Church, the Hoa Hoa Church, the Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches.